

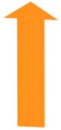
SEVEN ARROWS



What does this passage say?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What does this passage tell us about man?



What does this passage demand of me?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

COLOSSIANS 3:1-17



Paul compared the process of reflecting the image of God to changing clothes. A person wearing dirty clothes needs simply to take off the old clothes and put on the new, clean clothes. The old clothes represent our former life of sin. We know all of our sin—past, present, and future—has been forgiven by Jesus, and we now stand before God pure and holy. But we still sin. We fail to reflect God's image in all the ways we should. For the rest of our lives, we will continually take off the old clothes, those actions that were regular parts of our lives before we came to faith in Jesus. The process of putting off sin is known as repentance. It's what we did when we first began to follow Jesus—when we admitted our sin and asked God to give us the power to turn from it. We then put on our new clothes, the actions that define a follower of Jesus. God's power at work in our hearts will result in these new actions and will show that we are truly God's children.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-12















Do you ever hear big Christian words and tune them out because you don't really know what they mean? Sanctification may be one of those words, but it holds an important truth for the Christian life. Sanctification is the process of putting off sin and putting on holiness. Throughout the Old Testament, God took common items and set them apart for use in worship in the temple. A table or a kitchen utensil would be cleansed and used by the High Priest while offering sacrifices. Once the item was used in this way, it was holy and would not return to common use. In the same way, Paul said that believers in Jesus are set apart for a holy life and mission. Faith in Jesus has made us holy, and our lives should reflect this newfound identity. We should never return to lives of unholy living. A holy life clearly sets God's people apart from the world, not so we can take pride in how good we are, but so the world can see the transformation that faith in Jesus brings.

1 TIMOTHY 4:6-16















Timothy pastored a young church in Ephesus. A long-time friend of Paul, Timothy followed Paul's example of godly living and gospel work and was given the task of leading God's people in a church filled with challenging issues. Timothy might have been tempted to doubt his ability or calling, so Paul reminded him that his confidence should come from God and not from what others think. In fact, Timothy was responsible for setting the pace for others, even those who were older than him, by faithfully living in obedience to God. This work would not be easy, so Timothy needed to keep a close watch on his life, putting off sin and pursuing godliness. He also needed to hold firm to the truth of the gospel, refusing to give in to false teaching that would undermine the work of Jesus. Timothy challenges believers, particularly young Christians, to pursue godliness in all things and to trust God to use us and make a difference in His church.

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-10















The world of Paul's day was very different from ours in many ways, but there are common factors that shape life in a fallen world regardless of when or where a person lives. People often worry about the future and feel unsatisfied with the lives they have been given. We think that we would be happy and fulfilled, if we only had a little more money, a certain relationship, or were the star of the team. Paul challenged Timothy to refuse this perspective and to live a life marked by contentment. A Christian has already experienced the best there is this side of heaven—we've been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and nothing can take this salvation away. We are eternally secure in Jesus' love, so we can be content with whatever comes in this life. Whether we have a little or a lot, whether we are young or old, whether we feel important or feel like no one cares, we can relax and enjoy the grace of God we've been given.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-21



Jesus makes obedience possible and sets the example for how to live a faithful life to the final breath. At the outset of His ministry, Satan tempted Jesus to walk a different path to greatness than the one that led to the cross. At the end of His life, Pilate asked Jesus if He claimed to be God. Had Jesus denied that He was God's Son, He likely would have avoided execution. Jesus looked death in the face and confronted it head-on because of His faith in the promises of the Father. He knew that His death would save sinners, and that God would raise Him again on the third day. This same type of faith in the promise of God to raise believers on the last day provides the confidence we need to walk in faithfulness, even when we suffer for doing what is right.